



APIC KEYNOTER



NEWS OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL ITEMS COLLECTORS.

FEBRUARY 1963

SPECIAL ISSUE

FERD. O'BRIEN, SECRETARY

To date about one hundred members have sent in 1963 dues and the new information forms. The new form serves the dual purpose of application and permanent record. President Harris and your secretary beg your cooperation in sending in both three dollar dues and the new form. The layout and copy work on the membership roster is a heavy chore, and you can help your officers by sending in the two items requested now. If you send one without the other, a letter and postage will be necessary. So please do it now and send them both.

If you have already renewed, your 1963 membership card will be enclosed herewith. If not, a notice and another form will be included as required in the by-laws and constitution.

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Suppose all of the APIC members are "broke" or at least badly "bent" after paying Christmas bills and by taking advantage of the various offer and auction lists sent out by several collectors, as well as the fine APIC auction just concluded. Hope all have been able to obtain some choice items for your collections and that you still have \$3.00 left for your 1963 dues. I was well pleased with the APIC auction list and, while it should have been much larger, if all with duplicates would participate, I thought that the quality and variety more than made up for the quantity. In most cases the minimums were very realistic and fair, except on two or three items-- seems there always has to be one or two who want to gouge their fellow collectors. Thanks to all who offered and to those who bid, also to the Committee who ended up with all the work. Work is beginning on the March KEYNOTER and a four page Whitehead and Hoag catalogue picturing many 1896 buttons, will be an added bonus to all 1963 members.

U.I. "Chick" Harris

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From seven sources has come a request to your scribe to secure a copy of "A Century of Campaign Buttons". Some have asked for a second-hand copy; others suggest it be made available at--and I quote-- "a reasonable price". It is far from our intention to injure the feelings of anyone, but these letters remind us of a time long ago when a college text book was purchased at the price of hunger and a hot dog. It is no exaggeration to say that this is the only full length volume of any consequence to be published on this obscure though fascinating hobby we enjoy. If you discount the hours of research put in by its author, if you ignore the fortune in photographs it contains, the modest price of twenty-five dollars would not even begin to pay the printing cost of this monumental work. To the serious collector who intends to stay with Political Americana we say-- buy it, even though it means doing without something else you want very badly. It will enrich the pleasure of your collecting and itself increase in value. Ten years from now, by no stretch of the imagina-

tion can it fail to be worth double the price you paid.

Write to: University of Hartford--Box 1948
Hartford 1, Connecticut

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From Willard Earle comes an idea which appeals to us no end. He suggests that the members write in and give a description of the favorite item in their collections. Don't be surprised if you are asked to be next -- like the victims of Alan Funt on "Candid Camera". At any rate we told Willard the idea was so good he should have the honor of kicking off the project.

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MY FAVORITE ITEM
By Willard Earle

Most every collector has some item in his own collection which for some reason is outstanding. Perhaps, because of its rarity or for some sentimental reason. I have several items which I would not like to part with, but there is one, which to me, is almost priceless. Perhaps you will think this is some great rarity, but it is not. I expect every collector who might read this has one or more duplicates of it. It is just an ordinary 7/8" celluloid pin back, with a picture of FDR and the legend, "Friends of Franklin Roosevelt", rather common don't you think? I will let you in on the secret: it was given to me by FDR himself. This pin and the very nice letter which he wrote me will always be my most prized possession. The letter is dated February 4th, 1932, while FDR was still Governor of New York and was being talked about as a possible Democratic Candidate for the Presidency.

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FROM THE SECRETARY'S MAIL BOX

Monroe Ray has been confined to his bed, suffering from a kidney infection. He regrets the fact that his correspondence, too, is suffering but sends greetings to the APIC. If you have an extra governor button from your state or any old ones that you can spare, Monroe would be grateful to get them.

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Some of you have received the Christmas letter sent out by Ed and Agnes Puls. It describes their journey round the world by jet. Thirty-five Capitols and hundreds of interesting spots. It gave us a feeling of the National Geographic Magazine. We look forward to a showing of their color travelog. Ed will visit us in Midlothian in March.

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Thanks to Ann Rost for her kind letter. We regret to report that Ann broke her arm but is now recovered. Ann and Ed are moving to 1502 Dargail Court - St. Louis Co. - Dellwood, Missouri. Change your address book now. We hope to see Ann and Ed at the April Hobby Show at the Conrad Hilton in Chicago.

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Had dinner and a most interesting evening with Nate Eglit early in January. Besides being editor of the national magazine of T.A.M.S., Nate is polishing off the final work on his book on Political Buttons. Nate gave us a presentation copy of a very rare book of photos and text given the celebrities who attended the inaugural reception for President McKinley. Nate will help me in the preparation of the '63 roster.

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SHANKED POLITICAL BUTTONS

By Mrs. John J. O'Brien APIC #105

Having been a collector of Uniform Buttons (Military, Historical and Commemorative) for over 25 years, it was only natural that when dealers sent me Politicals on approval, I should be intrigued and begin to collect them, too.

In importance I suppose the WASHINGTON INAGURALS of 1789 would top any collection. However, they cannot rightfully be classed as "campaign", since the word signifies a struggle for supremacy and there was no contest in Washington's ascent to the Presidency. The first contest in which we find buttons bearing the implication of "campaigning" was that of ANDREW JACKSON vs JOHN QUINCY ADAMS in 1829. But even here we cannot be sure, since the election took place in 1828; and plain gilt buttons bear -- and on the reverse side only-- the name "Andrew Jackson" and the date of his inauguration, "March 4, 1829". Among button collectors these are generally accepted as the first of the definitely POLITICAL buttons to be found.

From the standpoint of historical interest I find campaign collecting in a very high bracket and by including the "hopefuls" and "also rans" of each campaign, such a Presidential collection really becomes a footnote to history--even to the inclusion of the "pin backs". Certainly they are neither hidden treasure nor works of art, but they are colorful and amusing. It is true there is no institution in the United States so typically American as the Presidential campaign.

As our United States grew accustomed to a central government, the struggle for control by at least two trends of thought became apparent. Proponents of these schools of thought tried to elect candidates to the Presidency who would carry out their ideas, and all sorts of publicity stunts were brought into play to attract the people's votes. Political buttons began to play an important part. There were only a few at first, but by 1888 the flood had begun. Having set the stage, so to speak, I shall now describe some of the shanked Political Buttons.

HENRY CLAY in 1834 reorganized the Whig Party into an aggressive political faith and there was an abundance of buttons, pins, badges, etc. The Whigs entered the 1836 campaign with WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON as their candidate. They used the Liberty Cap as their emblem and there were at least seven or eight variations. In 1840 the Whig Party used the Log Cabin as their emblem. Button manufacturers vied with each other in turning out buttons for the Whigs. D. F. Johnson states that 26 different dies, representing more than a score of manufacturers, have been verified, and he pictures 17. The log cabin referred to the lowly birth of William Henry Harrison. The barrel seen on many of these buttons originated from the fact that, when the nominating committee came to his mansion, "North Bend", a barrel of cider was tapped to serve as refreshment and to celebrate the event. It is interesting to note that President Harrison was not born in a log cabin, did not drink and was the last President born a British subject.

Among the early portraits on buttons with shanks are those of GENERAL WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON. The ANTI-VAN BUREN of 1842, used by the opposition, was not in the best of taste. Of the early portraits those of HENRY CLAY were perhaps the most beautiful Political buttons made in 1844; they still belonged to that period known as the "GOLDEN AGE OF BUTTONS". One in particular has a recessed front, floral wreath rim with the head of Henry Clay in profile to the right--"Henry" on right, "Clay" on left, with "1845" below. All produced by deflecting angles of microscopic lines visible only at certain angles of light. These were made by Scovill & Co. When the "flash" buttons first came out in 1956 I was reminded of these beautiful old CLAY buttons. Certainly the "Flash" are an improvement on the general run of plastics --now replacing the old celluloids. Another interesting button of 1844 was the TYLER & TEXAS. It was sponsored by the Tyler faction at the Baltimore Whig Convention. It really never came into use as President Tyler withdrew and Clay was nominated. It is not a gilt button but one-piece and its face tells the story -- a five point STAR in the center -- above "TYLER" and below "TEXAS". Polk, the Democrat, was elected and so far as is known, without the aid of buttons.

In 1848 GENERAL ZACHARY TAYLOR was the Whig candidate. Again the buttons were very beautiful portraits. Most popular were the plain busts with "ROUGH & READY" above. On the backs were "Hero of Monterey" (1846) or "Hero of Buena Vista" (1847). The most desirable to collectors are the ones showing him in the field on his horse.

No buttons have been found, to my knowledge, for the 1852 campaign. The Whigs lost and practically ceased to exist.

1858 saw the birth of the Republican Party and they campaigned, so far as is known, without a party button. The Democrats elected JAMES BUCHANNAN President--presumably without buttons.

1860-1864: Young Abraham Lincoln was a Whig and took part in the colorful campaigns of the 1830s and 1840s. Again there is no evidence of buttons being used in his campaigns. Ferro-type photography was the popular fashion and used for buttons. I have seen them with Lincoln's picture bearing the date "1865".

1868: There are several buttons for this election. ULYSSES S. GRANT and SCHUYLER COLFAX, the Republican winners, were shown on hard rubber buttons -- in relief. The Democratic losers, HORATIO SEYMOUR and FRANCIS P. BLAIR, are shown in the same type buttons. A tintype of Seymour mounted in metal is interesting but D. F. Johnson does not believe this button was Political. Nevertheless, the type is found in many important collections along with Lincoln Ferro-types. I have also heard of, but not seen, a button of GRANT -- medium sized, two-part brass with bust of Grant in relief. Just Buttons Magazine for October 1948 pictured three different tintype buttons and labeled "campaign". They are LINCOLN & HAMLIN (1860), GREELEY & BROWN (1872) and CLEVELAND & THURMAN (1888). The same article pictures three sheets of HEADS in tintype, ready to be cut into discs for use in badges or buttons: Schuyler Colfax, Grant, and Greeley.

1876: HAYES & TILDEN -- Hayes was declared the winner and Tilden became an "also ran". Quoting from the book THEY ALSO RAN regarding Tilden, "No American ever had a greater right to cry, 'I was robbed'". "The people had given Tilden a quarter million popular majority, yet he is the only man elected to the Presidency who never got his feet inside the White House".

1880: This was a contest between GARFIELD & ARTHUR vs HANCOCK & ENGLISH. Buttons bore the Presidential candidate's name at the top with the word "AND" between and the name of the name of the Vice Presidential Candidate at the bottom.

1884: "CLEVELAND" above "HENDRICKS" below, STAR and below "AND" across the field and another: "CLEVELAND" above "&" in the center and "HENDRICKS" below, were used by the Democratic Candidates; the Republican Candidates used five tail-feathers from the Democratic Rooster emblem with "PLUMED" above and "KNIGHT" below; another button bore a KNIGHT IN ARMOUR WITH SWORD AND SHIELD with "Blaine" to the right and "& LOGAN" on the left.

1888: CLEVELAND-THURMAN, Democrats; and HARRISON-MORTON, Republicans. (1) ROOSTER WALKING to right on GRASSY GROUND with BILLOWY BANNER IN BEAK-"CLEVELAND" above and "THURMAN" below with a STAR on each side. (2) An Eagle fronting, head to right, wings open, olive branch in right talon, three arrows in left talon, ribbon across the breast and wings. "PROTECTION", "HARRISON" above, "MORTON" below, STAR on each side. (3) Flat stippled border with portrait of HARRISON facing slightly to right.

1892: CLEVELAND- STEVENSON: HARRISON-WHITELAW REID. With candidate CLEVELAND we find many Lapel Stud Buttons come into popularity. Campaign fever ran high at this time and many new types appeared. This campaign also saw the advent of the PEOPLE'S PARTY which was made up of various factions. Their candidate was JAMES B. WEAVER and their button carried his portrait in the center with "PEOPLE'S PARTY" around the top. It is an engraving under celluloid--metal collet with stud-back.

1896: Time does not permit description of the various buttons and studs this campaign produced. From this date on each campaign brought out more and more. This year is generally conceded to be the beginning of the "celluloid pin-backs". Being much cheaper to produce, they achieved a much wider distribution and proved that they became an accessory to every succeeding campaign.

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"T.R." Buttons

By Stephen H. Bibler

I have been asked several times when these buttons were issued. Theodore Roosevelt was a participant in the campaigns of 1900, 1904 and 1912, and was even considered (against his wishes) in 1916. I place these buttons in the 1912 campaign.

I have in my collection five different buttons, etc. bearing the initials "T.R." However, my reason for placing these in the 1912 campaign is determined by six more buttons:

- (1) 1" celluloid button bearing "T.R." in large white letters on broad blue horizontal band across center of button. White background above and below this blue band bearing words "For President" above, and "1912" below in blue letters.
- (2) 7/8" celluloid button. "T.R." in large white letters on larger blue square in center, with red overall background bearing "A Square Deal all around". "1912" in white letters.
- (3) 1-1/8" composition button with shank. "T.R." and figure of a bull moose in brown with black background. The bull moose dates this with the Progressive Party.

On February 26, 1912 Roosevelt announced that he was candidate again for the Presidency, and at about the same time he originated the expression "My Hat is in the Ring" which is shown on the following buttons all of which bear the initials "T.R."

(4) 1½" celluloid button. Picture of Rough Rider had bearing letters "T.R." Phrase at top "My Hat is in the Ring". Band at edge. All inscriptions etc. in brown on white background.

(5) 7/8" celluloid button. "T.R." in white letters on a small Rough Rider hat, with words below "In the Ring". Two circular bands at border. Black on white.

(6) 1½" celluloid button. "T.R." in white letters on large blue circle in center. Large white band (beyond circle) bearing phrase "My Hat's in the Ring" in blue letters. Blue edge border. Appended to this button by a string is a small replica of a Rough Rider hat in lead.

"A Related Hobby"

By Webster T. Hayer

For a number of years, my wife and I have devoted our summer vacations to driving around the country and compiling a photographic history of our presidents.

We have visited their birthplaces, homes and burial places. We even included Jefferson Davis, the one and only president of the Confederate States of America and General David R. Archison, whom many believe was president on March 4, 1849.

During the course of these photographic pilgrimages, I have also taken shots pertaining to some of our vice-presidents, such as Alben Barkley and of such celebrated presidential aspirants as, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Stephen Douglas and Wendell Willkie, to mention but a few.

Some of our presidents and their families did considerable moving, for example, Lincoln, Grant and Wilson, and many trips were consumed in just visiting their many haunts. Through this travel we have become acquainted with a number of fine people in a great many places, and believe me, we have learned our history in a way we shall never forget it.

I took pictures of the bronze tablet, pried from the James Garfield birthplace stone, kneeling on the floor of the police station at Moreland Hills, Ohio, after it had been recovered from the vandals.

I shot pictures of Dwight Eisenhower's home, museum and library as the winds were subsiding, the morning after a tornado, and as the workmen were sawing and removing the fallen trees in Abilene, Kansas.

A policeman grabbed me as I was taking a picture of the tablet in the entrance of the William McKinley Bank, which was erected on the site of McKinley's birthplace in Niles, Ohio. Seeing a disreputable transient taking pictures in the bank, he thought, as he explained later, that I was "casing the joint".

Near Montpelier, Va., I took pictures of James Madison's home, after stealing a considerable distance up private roads, from the highway, and passing several "No Trespassing" signs.

Incidents, such as those I have mentioned, imprint the history of the person and place on one's memory forever.

Each year the federal, state and local governments, as well as private historical organizations, are doing a better job of preserving as well as publicizing the places, so important in our presidential history. And each, year it seems, that the interest in visiting these places is increasing.

Places like Mount Vernon, Monticello, The Hermitage, Ash Lawn, Grant's Tomb and Lincoln's Tomb have attracted a horde of the historically minded for many years. However a new era has emerged since World War II, with the addition of F.D.R.'s Hyde Park, Truman's Library, Hoover's birthplace and Library and Eisenhower's home, Museum and Library.

The addition of these new monuments to our presidents, together with more cars and better roads has resulted in more and more people becoming interested in and visiting places, erected to the memory of our presidents.

Much still remains to be done to preserve presidential history for example:

There are only iron road side markers near the sites where Madison, Monroe and Fillmore were born.

No one has even taken the trouble to pin point and mark the birthplaces of Van Buren, Ben Harrison and Harding.

The house where Andrew Johnson died is falling in ruins, and the last time I was in Elizabethton, Tenn. nothing was being done about it.

Last September, I spent nearly an entire day in schools, newspaper office, library and even a funeral parlor, trying to find where Zachary Taylor lived, when in Vincennes, Ind. For that matter the Taylor home in Louisville, Ky. is privately owned and the roadside marker, stating that he lived in the area, is over a block away.

Martin Van Buren's Lindenwald was once altered to become a nursing home and later purchased for a private home, realtered and a "No Trespass" gate erected.

I cannot recommend this related hobby too highly to the members of A.P.I.C. They will find that visiting the many sites connected with the history of our presidents will bring them joy and knowledge.

In addition to the selfish pleasure they derive, they can also do something constructive.

Some of the museums and libraries could use items, which you consider, duplicates, for their displays. Just ask them.

Most important of all, if you live near any of these unlocated or unmarked places, exert pressure where necessary to have

the locations checked and marked. If it is a building, join with others to have it preserved and where possible endeavor to have title to it placed with a civic or private organization that will preserve it.

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"Our Hobby"

By C. W. Fishbaugh

I notice that the two most popular hobbies are stamps and coins. Our hobby group is relatively small. Even the collectors of antique cars and match book covers outnumber us. In stamps you can get a catalog and buy almost any stamp providing you have the money. In coins the same is true. In either of these hobbies there is little chance to pick up a "find" In the presidential hobby every antique or second hand store may produce the "big one". In stamp collecting there is a certain speculation, many collectors buy sheets to put away for a rise. Then when there is some error like the Hammskjold stamp they go wild. In coin collecting the same is true. (Collectors are now buying by the roll, even the sack. I see new pennies of 1962D advertised at \$59.00 per sack! In any error they also go wild. Take the 1960 small date penny. In our hobby a pin can come out as Richard N. Nixon instead of Richard M. Nixon and no one gets excited. Any hobby produces a lot of useful information, but I believe our hobby produces more than any other. One certainly gains a rare insight into our government--because if you collect you're going to have to read to keep up with your collection. Yes, our group is small and select, yet it is growing. Each display or write-up brings new collectors. And one thing that I have always found interesting is that no matter how small the collection there are always a few items in it that are new to even the collector with 10,000 items. This is one of the satisfactions of our hobby and I do not believe it can be duplicated in any other.

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Copies

Many have written to express concern about copies of buttons which have appeared in many parts of the country. The questions run from "which buttons are they?" to "How can I tell whether it's contemporary or not?" It is the opinion of your secretary that while this problem is not a tempest in a teapot, neither is it insurmountable, nor should it frighten a single collector from our hobby into another field.

It is true that the long arm of Uncle Sam does not protect us as it does the coin and stamp collectors; but consider the antique and art lovers, and ask yourself, "What have they got going for them?" The answer is exactly the same as the protection available to us, intelligence and integrity. Get to know the treasures you love; so well that every characteristic of material form and manufacture is so familiar that no one could fool you. Remember that your buttons span almost seventy years, and a few changes show up from time to time. Use an inexpensive jeweler's loupe and examine your early Whitehead and Hoague, Baltimore, and Bastian Bros. specimens. Check the kind of metal, celluloid, and labels used. Note when the first lithographs began to appear, a very few loose pin types in 1916 and generally in 1920. In 1920 the "lithos" were rustproofed on the inside. a brass-like coating was applied, and often as not the

maker's name was printed. Celluloid or plastic continued also, but not all of these had rustproof insides. All paper labels should be printed sharp and clear. There are copies in plastic in which the label, while printed, looks hand drawn and almost illegible. If a celluloid has such a label it should be suspected.

Examine your 1960 and 1962 material. Note a new improved type of lithography, including very pale brass or silver-colored insides. If you find one of these for a candidate prior to 1956, be assured it is a copy.

In general we have noted three types of button copies: first, the modern "lithos" described above, and picturing every candidate back to McKinley and Bryan; second, the plastic copies of early celluloids, of poorer photographic quality and bearing poorly printed labels; and third, a large variety of one and a quarter inch white plastics with blue printing. They occur for Al Smith, Landon, Willkie and also copy many of the anti-F.D.R. slogans. There are many of these, and all have the same characteristics; white plastic, blue printing, and a chrome-like rustproof inside. The genuine slogan pins of 1940 all show traces of rust, or at least a rough surface. The true collector will acquire the ability to tell the chaff from the wheat, just as any antique expert must do, in order to stay in the business.

Integrity? Oh, yes, I almost forgot; if the dealer does not have it, let him starve.

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From Dave Frost comes another example. It is white plastic with black printing, an inch and a half in diameter for Kefauver. Dave says they are all similar and go back to Ben. Harrison. We have one for "True - man Truman", made by the same company Dave mentions. It is located in Cleveland. The manufacturer's name is on the inside, printed with a rubber stamp. (The odor should be enough.)

Our congratulations to Jack Martin on the recent successful auction he conducted. Jack is a personal friend, and it is a pleasure to bid in the kind of auction he runs. We were successful on five bids and can assure you he operates according to the highest standards of ethics. He has promised to visit here in about a month.

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A letter and bid package arrived today from our old buddy, Ken Broyles. Many goodies were inside. Also a number of buttons and souvenirs from the inauguration of Gov. Scranton. Ken is Republican state chairman in Pennsylvania and a close personal friend of the Governor. With a little luck APIC may have a cabinet member in 1965. President Scranton and State Secretary Broyles.

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"Mo" Wenzel from St. Petersburg, Florida writes, "I have an addition for your Magazine Article list:

TRUE - October, 1960. Cover and pages 48 and 49. Color photos and brief article on pins, buttons and badges through the years. 21 items pictured."

Thanks for the letter, "Mo". As I write the name Florida, it is twenty degrees below in Midlothian, and my fingers are blue.

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Thanks also to Ted Watts for an illustrated clipping from the Washington Evening Star of Oct. 29, 1962. An interesting article on political oddities. We hope Johns Hopkins is a pleasant home for you, and provides a happy collector's climate.

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I LIKE IKE

In a television program recently, Robert Montgomery was interviewed on his experiences as a speech coach and aide to President Eisenhower. Bob recalled a stupid blunder he made, causing great embarrassment to the President. Ike kindly explained it away by saying we made a mistake. Persisting in his apology, Montgomery was told, "Forget it, Bob. We won't make it again."

This great quality of President Eisenhower was again demonstrated in the U2 incident. His quick acceptance of responsibility accounts in large measure for his tremendous popularity. A century from now, the slogan, "I like Ike", will take its place with "The Father of his Country", "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" and "Honest Abe".

From among countless services to his country, historians must credit one as outstanding -- the lesson he taught on the futility of paternalism in federal government, and the awakening of a sense of personal morality and responsibility.

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Until next month when President Harris comes out with the auction results in the regular March edition of the Keynoter, we wish you much happiness and best of luck,

Ferd